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DEPUTIES CUT TIES TO A CONTRA CHIEF

They Join Main Rebel Alliance,
Leaving Former Sandinista
Hero Without Troops

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SAN JOSE, Costa Rica, May 11 — Capping three years of bitter discord, virtually all the military commanders fighting under Edén Pastora Gómez, the Nicaraguan rebel leader, have cut their ties with him and agreed to wage a joint campaign with American-backed rebels.

The decision leaves Mr. Pastora as a commander without an army. His top six military lieutenants, who lead 1,000 to 2,000 rebel fighters, renounced his authority on Saturday and allied themselves with the American-backed United Nicaraguan Opposition rebel group, which includes the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, a guerrilla army based in Honduras.

The move is likely to strengthen the hand of political leaders within the United Nicaraguan Opposition who are gathering in Miami this week for a showdown with more conservative rebel leaders in the group over who should control the war and the political program of the rebel movement.

The apparent loss of his troops comes after a three-year period when Mr. Pastora, 49 years old, moved from one political or military mishap to another.

"He has been a great symbol, a man with great charisma," said José Dávila, a spokesman for the rebel commanders who left Mr. Pastora. "But he lacks political ability. He could never make an alliance; so instead, people left him."

The rebel commanders' decision appears to be a major plus for the Central Intelligence Agency's long effort to create an effective two-front war against the Sandinistas. Mr. Pastora's former lieutenants have been fighting in a strategically important area of southern Nicaragua.

They will now coordinate attacks with the northern rebel fighters of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, according to a statement the commanders issued here, and will be supplied by the United Nicaraguan Opposition, which has received \$27 million in nonlethal American aid.

Mr. Pastora had rejected pressure from the intelligence agency to ally himself with the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, charging that it was dominated by former Nicaraguan army officers who had been loyal to the Nicaraguan dictator, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, before he was deposed in 1979.

But without American backing, Mr. Pastora proved unable to keep his troops supplied. In addition, there was more than a hint that his deeper complaint against allying with the Honduras-based rebels was that his personal power would be diminished.

After achieving fame as "Commander Zero," a hero in the Sandinista revolution, Mr. Pastora abandoned the Sandinista leaders he helped bring to power, charging they were Communists allied with the Soviet bloc. In 1983, he opened military operations against the Sandinistas from bases on the Costa Rican border and predicted that mass desertions from the Sandinista army would bolster him.

The desertions never came. But as a nationalist and a recognized hero, Mr.

Pastora was attractive to the Central Intelligence Agency, which provided him with advisers and several million dollars worth of arms for 7,000 fighters.

But from that high point, Mr. Pastora proved incapable of leading a sustained military campaign and some aides and lieutenants complained he was inept. Pressure mounted from the C.I.A. to ally with the more effective rebel army in Honduras. At the height of the dispute, on May 30, 1984, Mr. Pastora was almost killed by a bomb planted at a news conference. No one took responsibility for the bombing.

In the time since, he and his troops have barely scraped along. Now Mr. Pastora has been openly criticized by most of those who once followed him. He has replied by calling them traitors.